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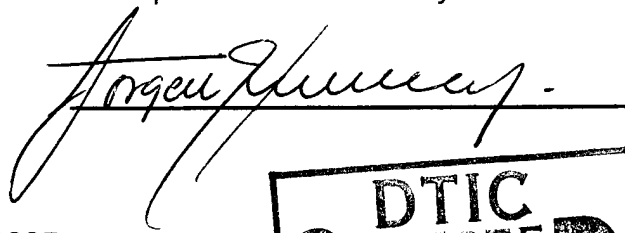
SWEDISH SECURITY POLICY AT A CROSSROADS

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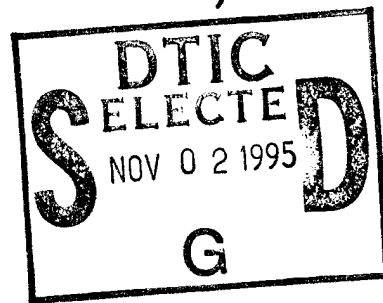
Jörgen Ericsson
Captain, R. Sw. Navy

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The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.



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Paper directed by
Professor G. Paul Holman, JR.
Faculty, Department of National Security
Decision Making

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<p>15. Abstract: SWEDISH SECURITY POLICY AT A CROSSROADS.</p> <p>SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, SWEDEN HAS PURSUED A SECURITY POLICY OF NON-ALIGNMENT IN PEACE TIME, CLAIMING NEUTRALITY IN THE EVENT OF WAR. THIS POLICY, WHICH HAS PROVED SUCCESSFUL SINCE SWEDEN HAS NOT TAKEN PART IN ANY WAR SINCE 1813, IS FULLY ACCEPTED AND DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE SWEDISH SOCIETY. HOWEVER IN THE RECENT YEARS, THE SITUATION IN EUROPE HAS UNDERGONE SIGNIFICANT CHANGE. THE END OF THE COLD WAR HAS REWRITTEN THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL MAP OF EUROPE. THE THREAT OF A MAJOR WAR IN EUROPE HAS DISAPPEARED, BUT NEW THREATS, UNCERTAINTIES AND UNKNOWNNS HAVE EMERGED, CHALLENGING THE SECURITY OF EUROPE.</p> <p>IN ADDITION TO THESE CHANGES, SWEDEN HAS, TOGETHER WITH FINLAND AND AUSTRIA, GAINED MEMBERSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU). THE MEMBERS OF THE EU HAVE, IN THE EUROPEAN UNION TREATY, AGREED TO FOUND THE UNION, NOT ONLY ON FREE TRADE, BUT ALSO ON A COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY. THE NEW SITUATION CALLS FOR A REEVALUATION OF SWEDISH SECURITY POLICY. BESIDES THE PRESENT POLICY, THERE ARE TWO OTHER ALTERNATIVES THAT SHOULD BE ANALYSED, (1) TO BE A MEMBER IN NATO, (2) TO BE A MEMBER IN THE WESTERN EUROPEAN UNION (WEU, THE DEFENSE ORGANIZATION OF THE EU).</p> <p>BY BEING MILITARILY NON-ALLIGNED WITHIN THE EU, SWEDEN WILL NOT GAIN THE ADVANTAGES THAT A COLLECTIVE SECURITY ARRANGEMENT GIVES, BUT WILL BE LOOKED UPON AS A PART OF SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT. HENCE, SWEDEN'S CLAIM OF NEUTRALITY WILL CARRY LITTLE CREDIBILITY. TO SEEK MEMBERSHIP IN NATO WILL GIVE SWEDEN EXTENSIVE SECURITY GUARANTEES, BUT WILL HAVE AN IMPACT ON FINLAND TO MOVE IN THE SAME DIRECTION. RUSSIA WILL, UNDOUBTEDLY, PERCEIVE SUCH AN EXPANSION OF NATO AS A THREAT, EVEN MORE SO IF ANY OF THE FORMER SOVIET SATELLITE STATES IN EASTERN EUROPE ARE INCORPORATED IN NATO. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT MIGHT WELL LEAD TO A SERIOUS DEGRADATION OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN EUROPE. THUS, SWEDEN'S MEMBERSHIP IN NATO WILL NOT ACHIEVE HER IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE OF CONTINUED DETENTE IN EUROPE. THE THIRD ALTERNATIVE, TO JOIN THE WEU, WOULD ENHANCE SWEDEN'S SECURITY BY ADDING THE STRENGTH OF A COLLECTIVE ARRANGEMENT WITHOUT CHALLENGING RUSSIA AND, POSSIBLY, DERAILED HER FROM THE FRAGILE PATH TOWARD DEMOCRACY. SWEDEN'S PARTICIPATION WILL STRENGTHEN THE WEU AND ADD TO THE UNITY OF EFFORT BETWEEN THE EU AND THE WEU. A WELL DEVELOPED COOPERATION WITHIN AND BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS IS A PREREQUISITE FOR EASING TENSIONS IN EUROPE AND FOR DEVELOPING GROWING CONFIDENCE AND COMPANIONSHIP BETWEEN WESTERN AND EASTERN EUROPE, WHICH EVENTUALLY WILL LEAD TO A SECURITY ARRANGEMENT FOR ALL OF EUROPE.</p>			
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Abstract of

SWEDISH SECURITY POLICY AT A CROSSROADS

Since the beginning of the nineteenth century, Sweden has pursued a security policy of non-alignment in peace time, claiming neutrality in the event of war. This policy, which has proved successful since Sweden has not taken part in any war since 1813, is fully accepted and deeply rooted in the Swedish society. However in the recent years, the situation in Europe has undergone significant change. The end of the Cold War has rewritten the geographical and political map of Europe. The threat of a major war in Europe has disappeared, but new threats, uncertainties and unknowns have emerged, challenging the security of Europe.

In addition to these changes, Sweden has, together with Finland and Austria, gained membership in the European Union (EU). The members of the EU have, in the European Union Treaty, agreed to found the Union, not only on free trade, but also on a common foreign and security policy. The new situation calls for a reevaluation of Swedish security policy. Besides the present policy, there are two other alternatives that should be analysed, (1) to be a member in NATO, (2) to be a member in the Western European Union (WEU, the defense organization of the EU).

By being militarily non-aligned within the EU, Sweden will not gain the advantages that a collective security arrangement gives, but will be looked upon as a part of such an arrangement. Hence, Sweden's claim of neutrality will carry little credibility. To seek membership in NATO will give Sweden extensive security guarantees, but will have an impact on Finland to move in the same direction. Russia will, undoubtedly, perceive such an expansion of NATO as a threat, even more so if any of the former Soviet satellite states in Eastern Europe are incorporated in NATO. Such a development might well lead to a serious degradation of the political situation in Europe. Thus, Sweden's membership in NATO will not achieve her important objective of

continued détente in Europe. The third alternative, to join the WEU, would enhance Sweden's security by adding the strength of a collective arrangement without challenging Russia and, possibly, derail her from the fragile path toward democracy. Sweden's participation will strengthen the WEU and add to the unity of effort between the EU and the WEU. A well developed cooperation within and between the two organizations is a prerequisite for easing tensions in Europe and for developing growing confidence and companionship between Western and Eastern Europe, which eventually will lead to a security arrangement for all of Europe.

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Swedish Security Policy at a Crossroads.

Now is the right time to determine future Swedish security policy. Sweden's newly gained membership in the European Union (EU)¹ has laid the last foundation-stone on which a new, or altered, Swedish security policy can be built. Sweden's political and military leadership faces today, without doubt, one of the most important decisions concerning future security policy, that it has faced in several decades. Should Sweden remain non-aligned in peacetime, claiming neutrality in war, or, should Sweden engage herself in terms of both the economics and the security policies of the emerging new Europe? This question defines the two main alternatives Sweden has to choose between. Either continue to be "alone by herself" or to take an active part in the regional security arrangement within the EU.

From both the perspectives of a Swede and of a European, Sweden has the right and the duty to help shoulder responsibility for the common security of Europe. In the light of an analysis and assessment of current Swedish security policy, and the main factors that will influence future policy, Sweden ought to adopt a policy of greater engagement in the common security of Europe. Such a change in the direction of Sweden's policy should result in increased possibilities to fulfil the objectives of Swedish national security policy. Sweden has the economic, diplomatic and military means necessary to share this responsibility. These resources could help form the future Europe into a more stable, democratic and peaceful region in cooperation with the other members of the EU.

The National Objectives Will Last – Can Sweden Change the Means ?

During the past few years, Europe has undergone more sudden and profound political changes in peacetime than the continent has experienced in any other peace time period during the last two centuries. In the Post-Cold War Era the risk of a major war in Europe has decreased considerably. The relatively stable bipolar system, which contained this risk, no longer exists. Europe of today can be characterized as more secure but with less peace. This trend is underlined by the current war in former Yugoslavia and the ethnic conflicts between some of the republics of the former Soviet Union. Hence, the balance of power between the US and the former Soviet Union did contain a greater risk of a major war, but was, at the same time, an instrument that deterred regional crises from emerging. The contemporary lack of this deterrence signifies a greater risk that bilateral and internal disputes can develop, in a short time, into regional crises or conflicts. Thus, for Sweden, the end of the Cold War has positive implications, but there are still problems, uncertainties and unknowns that threaten the security of Europe.

In addition to these changes (and to a certain degree because of them) Sweden has, together with Finland and Austria, applied for, negotiated for and eventually voted for joining the EU. These political changes, bringing membership in EU, have fundamentally altered the foundations of Sweden's security policy. The new situation implies a requirement for Sweden to analyse carefully how to accomplish the objectives of its security policy within the context of the EU.

Sweden's objectives are clearly stated :

The purpose of Sweden's security policy is ultimately to defend the freedom and national independence of our country. We will in all situations and ways that we choose ensure our freedom of action so that we can develop our society in political, economic, social, cultural and other ways. An important component of our security policy is to work externally for defusing of tension, arms reduction, cooperation and democratic development.²

Swedish security policy also emphasizes the objective of maintaining a lasting peace and stability in Scandinavia and surrounding areas, with the ultimate objective of defusing any risk of Sweden getting involved in or affected by war.³

Up to now, the principal means of achieving these objectives have consisted of being free from military alliances in peacetime, claiming neutrality in war, and supporting relatively strong defense forces. Furthermore, Sweden and the Swedish armed forces have emphasized the importance of taking an active part in UN peace-keeping missions. Sweden is also a keen member of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Swedish society has fully accepted this policy and the means to accomplish its security objectives. Over a long period of years, it has become deeply rooted in Swedish opinion. Most importantly, Sweden has been very successful with this policy. Sweden has not participated in any war since the beginning of the nineteenth century. By tradition and by necessity, there has always been a sincere national consensus concerning Swedish security policy, even among politicians with very different ideologies. All this makes it even harder for current and future Swedish leaders to begin a process of discussing and reconsidering different security solutions for Europe. However, while acknowledging that it takes considerable political courage to initiate and to take the lead in this necessary reevaluation of the traditional security policy, a professional military viewpoint encourages political leaders to do so.

During the Cold War Era, Swedish military strategy was founded on the assumption that any major war in Europe that might have affected Sweden would have, more or less, fully absorbed the capacity of the two superpowers. Therefore, only a marginal part of any adversary's military resources could have been turned toward an assault against Sweden. On that premise, Sweden's armed forces would have had

strength enough either to deter or to defeat such an assault.

This military strategy, "the Margin-doctrine," became obsolete with the end of the Cold War and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. "The Margin-doctrine" was replaced by a new strategy which concentrates, in the short term, on the Swedish armed forces' ability to deter or to defeat a "strategic assault" by small, but highly mobile forces, striking at the military and civilian command structure. In the longer term, after mobilization, the armed forces would be able to counter a major assault against Sweden.

In 1992, a Parliamentary Defense Decision confirmed the new military strategy. It also included a small increase in the defense budget in order to maintain and to develop the defense capability and to secure freedom of action for the Defense Department regarding the future force structure that will be decided in 1996. Thus, the politicians have laid down a good basis for reconsidering Swedish security policy.

The European Union Treaty and Swedish Security Policy.

In addition to the future threat and Sweden's geo-strategic situation, another important factor to examine in reconsidering Swedish security policy, is the development planned for the EU and what demands that development will make on the members and, above all, on Sweden.

The Maastricht-meeting in December 1991 laid the foundation of the EU. According to the resulting European Union Treaty, the EC members¹ agreed not only upon a free market, a future monetary union (a common currency), but also upon a future Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). As a consequence of that agreement, the defense organization for the EC, the Western European Union (WEU), was revitalized and named as the future defense organ of the Union, responsible for

planning and implementing all defense matters. The treaty prescribes that these military measures shall be harmonised with NATO and with the individual defense commitments of the signatories to the treaty. This process is to be developed and introduced as a long term policy in a series of phases.⁴

Bi- or multi-lateral arrangements may be made within the framework of the WEU or NATO, provided they do not clash with those laid down in the European Union Treaty. At the end of December 1992, all the members of EC, except the Republic of Ireland, became associated with the WEU, either as full members, observers or, in case of NATO members who did not wish to become full members, as associated members with full rights. The tasks of the WEU are:

- * To form a European pillar of the transatlantic bridge,
- * To provide a forum for regional discussions of the harmonisation of defense and security matters affecting Europe,
- * To develop a European defense identity,
- * To coordinate military operations of its members,
- * To harmonize these operations with NATO.⁵

According to present plans, the EU and the WEU will fully integrate in 1998, with the EU as the political head of the WEU. But there are still some problems to be solved with the implementation of this, as it now seems, overly optimistic plan. For example, Germany wants to use the NATO command and control structure, not wanting to create another when there is already a very effective one available. France does not agree to this, not wanting any U.S. involvement in the WEU. Germany advocates a close cooperation with NATO as the only organization that possesses a strategic lift capacity, a world wide intelligence system, etc. Furthermore, Germany wants the WEU to be able to act only within a mandate given by the UN or the OSCE. France, on the contrary, argues

that the WEU should be able to take whatever actions its members wish, without limitations. Thus, while there are still many uncertainties regarding the development of the CFSP and the WEU, these uncertainties constitute possibilities for influencing the emerging cooperative security arrangement.

In addressing the issue of membership in the WEU, Swedish politicians, so far, have taken a very cautious attitude. In June 1992, the Swedish defense minister gave a speech at the WEU headquarters in Paris in which he stated:

Sweden has as great an interest as any other European country in taking an active part in building up a new security architecture in Europe, in order to be able to handle, contain or solve the security threats and tensions which we are likely to face in the future... . As a member of the European Union, Sweden will participate fully in a common security and foreign policy, as established in the Maastricht Agreement in the autumn of 1991. As far as Sweden is concerned, this means a commitment to be responsible for our own defence so that we can remain neutral in the event of war in our vicinity. Sweden is only responsible for its own defence... . At the moment, the European structure of cooperation and security is at formative stage.

There are a number of different possibilities for continued development in the 1990's. In a recent report the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Swedish Parliament stated unanimously that Sweden's policy of non-participation in military alliances imposes no restrictions on its participation in European cooperation, and that Sweden's security policy is characterized by active and full participation in the endeavours to fulfil the goals shared by all European nations. The Foreign Affairs committee states that "A decision concerning the issue of WEU membership is not possible before Sweden has obtained membership in the European Union. Before that, the issue is without relevance. The policy of non-participation in military alliances still remains."⁶

After the general election in September 1994, the Social Democratic Party formed a new government. The new Defense Minister has, on various occasions, declared that the policy of "non-alignment in peacetime claiming neutrality in war" will

not be changed, although Sweden became a member of the EU in January 1995.

This position raises at least two important military questions which Sweden needs to answer. *First*, is it possible to participate fully in the CFSP and, at the same time, to be only responsible for the defense of Sweden? *Second*, is it possible to be a member of the EU, sharing its path towards the CFSP, and still maintain a credible neutrality in the event of war? These are essential questions that must be answered in the process of determining future Swedish security policy. Before answering them, it is appropriate to address two other important factors influencing Swedish security: Sweden's strategic situation and the future threat.

Continuous Strategic Importance.

During the Cold War epoch, Scandinavia was a flank area of the projected main war theater in Central Europe and, therefore, of considerable strategic interest to both NATO and the WP. This strategic interest increased as the Soviet Union built up a nuclear-armed, submarine capacity in the Kola region. With the end of the Cold War, this military-strategic connection between Scandinavia and Central Europe weakened. When an assault from Eastern Europe into Germany was no longer a credible threat, the strategic significance of Scandinavia decreased. Even so, Northern Europe retains three important features: its nuclear-strategic role, its maritime-strategic role, and the fact that Scandinavia has the only common border between Western Europe and Russia.

Russia's nuclear-armed submarines based in the Kola region will increase in importance after the completion of the START treaty's provisions. Russia's ability to protect these assets and the Kola Peninsula will remain a vital security interest, which will continue to give great military significance to Scandinavia and the surrounding seas. This is underlined by the fact that the reductions in military forces, which have recently occurred in Central Europe, have not spread northwards. There are significant

indications that Russia continues to reinforce her capability in qualitative terms on the Kola Peninsula. The Russian withdrawal of modern Air Force units from former satellite states in Europe has enabled Russia to improve and to modernize units deployed on the Kola Peninsula. In addition, Russian shipyards continue to produce cruisers, destroyers and frigates to protect the increasingly important nuclear-armed submarines in the Northern Fleet.⁷

The Nordic area, as a whole, remains an important strategic region. It could be the starting point for protective actions against actual or perceived threats in a possible conflict. The Swedish defense minister referred to this issue in his speech at the International Air Display at Farnborough, England, in 1992:

The Kola Peninsula is a central factor in Russia's defence. As long as Russia has some of its most vital military bases located in this area, Sweden and the North Calotte⁸ will continue to be interesting from a strategic point of view. In a war situation we can assume that the Russians may try to establish a protected zone to the west of their borders which, as we all know, is where Sweden and certain other countries happen to be situated.⁹

During a Conference on Defense Policy in Sälen, Sweden, January 29 1995, General Ove Wiktorin, Sweden's newly appointed Supreme Commander addressed the same issue:

What kind of World can we look forward to, when considering our security and defense policy? When examining the strategic interest for Sweden and Scandinavia we discover one paradox concerning the accomplished arms reduction within the nuclear-strategic area. The importance of Murmansk and the Kola Peninsula have increased. This relative shifting northward is an important part of the future strategic interest for Scandinavia and Sweden. More than 60% of Russia's strategic nuclear capacity, compared to 25% a couple of years ago, will now be deployed in the north. The strategic importance of the Kola Peninsula brings, in its turn, a concentration of ground-, sea- and air units to the area. Hence, Scandinavia and Sweden will remain in the strategic heat for long time to come.

In this context, it is also appropriate to recognize that Sweden still constitutes a major riparian in the Baltic Sea. The Baltic forms now, as it has for many centuries, an economic intersection-zone. Sweden and Germany are the dominating powers around the Baltic neighbouring Poland, the three fragile Baltic States, Russia and the Kaliningrad Oblast. The Baltic is Russia's gateway to the West and has, as such, increased in strategic importance.¹⁰

Four Main Actors Frame Europe of Tomorrow.

For some considerable time in the future, the security policy for Europe - and hence for Sweden - will be dominated by four actors: Russia, EU/WEU and NATO, with OSCE probably playing a less important role. These four actors will develop an interaction with each other in defining reactions to a future threat spectrum and, in this way, they will have an impact on Sweden's defense planning.

The breakdown of the Soviet Union opened up promising opportunities for peace and democracy, but at the same time, there remains considerable uncertainty about the future. There is a major risk that these developments will backfire. The breakdown of the Soviet Union left Russia in a state of political and economic disintegration. There are several ethnic conflicts within Russia, some of which are on the verge of civil war or have already degenerated into combat. Russia also has disputes with its neighbours over the distribution of the former Soviet Union's military assets, including parts of the fleet and the enormous stocks of nuclear or conventional armaments. These disputes will probably remain a source of political and military instability for a long time to come. Another source of irritation and uncertainty is the relatively large number of ethnic Russians living outside Russia, in states such as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Ukraine. Russian politicians have, on various occasions in more or less harsh words, emphasized Russian interests in protecting the well-being of these ethnic Russian groups.

Scholars and various experts have written columns and columns about developments in Russia. They all describe the uncertainties and risks that are connected with the evolution of a democratic and peaceful Russia toward a functioning market economy. Zbigniew Brzezinski puts it this way: "Unfortunately, considerable evidence suggests that the near-term prospects for a stable Russian democracy are not very promising. The growing political influence of the Russian army, especially in Russia's foreign policy, is not reassuring."¹¹

Both NATO and the EU (including the WEU) have a vast security interest in trying to guide Russia on the path toward democracy and a market economy. NATO has an interest in military security, stability, controlled disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The EU shares, for obvious reasons, the same interests as NATO, but there are also great economic issues at stake. Russia and the other former Soviet republics are a vital market for the future economic growth and well-being of the EU.

Will the EU and its defense organization, the WEU, ever be mature and united enough to take on this challenge successfully? There are many doubters and few optimists. The optimists are often found amongst politicians within the EU. Since the Maastricht-meeting, in December 1991, there has been an ever increasing attitude of doubt and criticism of the total unification of Europe, particularly by the common people of the "old" as well as by more recent member countries. This doubt was made clear in the referenda that have taken place within the member countries prior to the ratification of the European Union Treaty. In each country, there was a significant minority that voted no.¹²

In spite of such doubts, Austria, Finland and Sweden have voted for membership in the EU. Their referenda should not be interpreted as whole-hearted

support for the implications of the European Union Treaty, but rather as a wish to be inside rather than outside the union. In the long term, probably no European country is economically strong enough to guarantee economic growth and well-being for its citizens if it were to remain outside the EU. The Norwegians voted, in a referendum in November 1994, against membership in the EU mainly because of the strong Norwegian economy due to vast oil resources and, out of concern that the Norwegian fishing industry would be badly hurt by the competition within the EU. However, there is great concern in Norway that staying outside the Union may, in the long term weaken the Norwegian economy. Probably, Norway will make another try to enter the Union in 1996. Switzerland, another country still outside the EU, did not seek membership due to her neutrality. Like Norway, Switzerland is worried about the long term effect on her not too strong economy. Her neutrality could prove to be very expensive.

The EU and the WEU will only gain the power given to them by their members, and, today there is considerable hesitation among many of the members about how much power they should possess. There is no overwhelming majority of people in any sector who want to strengthen the power of EU/WEU in terms of national and regional sovereignty. Even within the area of economic cooperation, there are issues which are unsolved because of the unwillingness to reduce national self-determination. There is a risk that the EU and the WEU may fit for a long time to come the description that Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eysken gave during the Gulf Crisis: "the EC is an economic giant, a political dwarf and a military worm."¹³

NATO and, perhaps foremost, the United States have won the Cold War. NATO and the US have had problems, similar to those of the EU and the WEU, in adjusting to the rapid developments in Europe during recent years. Several Eastern European states have already expressed their wish to become members of NATO. On its home turf, the US has been and still is debating its future national and military strategy.

There are advocates for a variety of different directions: isolationism, collective security and primacy. In July 1994, the Clinton administration finally issued its "National Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement." The strategy commits the US to shouldering leadership by encouraging and endorsing the development of democracy and maintaining a stable security structure. The strategy emphasizes the future importance of NATO and US forces in Europe. In rough numbers, this means a continued deployment of about 100,000 US troops in Europe. The newly created Partnership for Peace (PFP) provides a vital context:

With the adoption of the US initiative, PFP, NATO is playing an increasingly important role in our strategy of European integration, extending the scope of our security cooperation to the new democracies of Europe. Twenty-one nations, including Russia, have already joined the partnership, which will pave the way for a growing program of military cooperation and political consultation... . In keeping with our strategy of enlargement, PFP, is open to all former members of the Warsaw Pact as well as other European states... .During his trip to Europe in July, the President reaffirmed his commitment to NATO's future expansion, with PFP as the best path toward NATO membership. The aim of NATO's future expansion, however, will not be to draw a new line in Europe further east, but to expand stability, democracy, prosperity and security cooperation to an even broader Europe.¹⁴

Contrasting with those statements, both military and civilian, Russian spokesmen have not hesitated to employ harsh language in making known their objections to any expansion of NATO. The Russian foreign minister went as far as to declare in words, painfully reminiscent of the old Soviet style, that any tendency in that direction would create "a buffer zone that could be crushed in any situation ." Similarly, Marshal Pavel Grachev imperiously declared, "Russia cannot allow Poland to be admitted into NATO."¹⁵ During the latest OSCE-summit in Budapest, the plans for an extended NATO resulted in a verbal clash between President Clinton and President Yeltsin. The two Presidents clearly disagreed on the role NATO ought to play in coming years. In particular, Yeltsin denounced plans to prepare for extension of NATO's security

guarantees to some former Soviet satellites. In referring to the issue Yeltsin said: "Europe, not having yet freed itself from the heritage of the Cold War, is in danger of plunging into a cold peace. Why sow the seeds of mistrust? After all, we are no longer enemies, we are partners."¹⁶

From the beginning of the Cold War, the two superpowers very carefully respected each other's sphere of interest. This posture was reflected in the events of Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and, in Grenada and Panama during the 80's. The reason for this was simple: the military superpowers did not have any vital national interests within each other's sphere of influence. Therefore, it is hard to believe that the US, and hence NATO, has a vital interest in giving security guarantees as extensive as NATO's to, for example, the Baltic States or to Poland. There is an obvious risk that PFP will be an everlasting waiting room, of insignificant importance, for those Eastern European states who now strive toward membership in NATO. An increase in NATO members consisting of former communist states in the vicinity of Russia would not lead to a situation of détente in Europe. If we are fortunate enough that Eastern Europe and Russia take a turn for the better, NATO will probably, in the long term, evolve into an organization with more political and fewer military overtones.

Since the foundation of OSCE in Helsinki in 1975, the organization has negotiated and implemented an array of Confidence-Building-Measures (CBM). These actions have undoubtedly contributed to reducing misperceptions of various military deployments and exercises. In addition to this, OSCE has in recent years expanded its sphere of activities by involvement in peace-making efforts in former Yugoslavia and in Nagorno-Karabach. These efforts have been partly coordinated with WEU, but so far they have not been very successful. The very number and diversity of its members make it, more or less, impossible for this 53-nation organization, spanning the globe from

Vancouver to Vladivostok, to speak with one voice.¹⁷

A Complex Threat Spectrum Pregnant with Uncertainties.

Not surprisingly, a description of the policy trends these main actors, (Russia, EU/WEU, NATO and the less important OSCE) are taking and their possible future development, leads to no clear and pre-determined conclusions regarding the future threat to Sweden. The rate of change in Europe is still and will probably continue to be rapid for another one or two decades. It is too early to determine a stable threat spectrum in the new pattern of security policy influencing the future of Northern Europe. In light of this, we must realize that the future has a number of uncertainties and unknowns which will affect Swedish security policy.

The risk of a third world war has faded away, but new threats like a revanchist and expansive Russia, regional conflicts, terrorism, organized crime or uncontrolled floods of refugees have emerged. An important conclusion is that the threat spectrum of today and tomorrow has become less predictable and more complicated than the one of yesterday. A worst case scenario may be a NATO with less credible military deterrence, a weakened Western European cooperation within EU/WEU, and an expansive re-armed Russia. A future Swedish security policy has to be able to contribute to the prevention of, or in a worst case scenario to handle, such a situation.

What are the Possible Security Policy Solutions ?

What are the possible and achievable security policy solutions for Sweden as a member of the EU? The Swedish defense minister has clearly defined one alternative: "Sweden will participate fully in CFSP, as established in the Maastricht Agreement. As far as Sweden is concerned it means a commitment to be responsible for our own defense so that we can remain neutral in the event of war in our vicinity. Sweden is only

responsible for its own defense."¹⁸ But, in the new situation in Europe, in the post Cold War era, there are other feasible alternatives. A list of concrete, possible and achievable alternatives for Sweden are:

- * To remain non-aligned to any military alliance and claim neutrality in event of war.
- * To apply for membership in NATO.
- * To apply for full membership in the WEU.

Non-Aligned – Claiming Neutrality.

The EU is developing within a Western European society which is highly computerized, economically integrated, and which benefits from an enormous information flow and from multinational corporations that do not recognize any borders. Sweden, as a member of the organization, will be a part of a society which strives toward a boundless, unified community which is founded on solidarity amongst its members. Would it then be possible to exclude some of Sweden's security assets when they are most needed, in times of crisis or war in Europe, by arguing that these resources should be used solely for the defense of Sweden?

When advocating Swedish membership in the EU, combined with a policy of non-alignment and claiming neutrality in the event of war, Swedish politicians often use the Republic of Ireland as an example. Ireland has long been a neutral member of the EU and, therefore, not a member of the WEU. But Ireland has a completely different strategic situation than Sweden. Ireland is geographically situated west of the British Isles, far from a dissolving Russia, far from Russia's important nuclear capacity in the Kola Peninsula and far from the former communist states in Eastern Europe. Hence, the conclusion that Sweden can copy the Irish solution is not valid. Furthermore, it is doubtful if a country that is deeply engaged in an economic and political union can really claim neutrality according to international law. If it does, can that neutrality have any

credibility? It would certainly not be credible to any country which is opposed to or in conflict with a member or members of the EU.

The core question remains: Is it possible for Sweden to achieve its stated objectives while dividing its security policy into two dimensions: one political within the EU and one "standing alone," claiming a neutrality which has a very doubtful credibility? In such a situation, Sweden will gain little from the other members concerning military security, but will bear the burden of being looked upon as aligned with the EU's security arrangements. To divide its resources and to "stand alone" in a Europe with its future security filled by uncertainties and unknowns is the worst alternative. This alternative gives Sweden only the security which she can bring by herself, and it lacks the strength which is drawn from collective arrangements. For Sweden, with her relatively limited resources, the ability to achieve her objectives would be higher when combined with the weight and power of an alignment or alliance. The freedom from alliances and claims of neutrality had an intrinsic value during the days of the Cold War. That intrinsic value has been heavily reduced, if not completely disappeared in the Europe of today and tomorrow.

If Sweden should seek security cooperation within an alliance or alignment, there are two alternatives: (1) to apply for membership in NATO (and by entering NATO gaining membership in the WEU), or (2) to apply for membership in the WEU only.

Collective Security Within Nato.

In the current Swedish public defense discussions, a daily newspaper, which has nation-wide coverage, has advocated in its editorial column that Sweden should apply for membership in NATO as soon as possible. The editor's main argument for Swedish membership in NATO is the relatively extensive downsizing of the defense budget, currently being discussed by the present Social Democratic government. If this

reduction should take place, the Swedish Defense Forces, according to the editor, will have difficulty in maintaining a credible deterrence against aggression and will suffer from an inadequate ability to defend the country in case of an assault. Therefore, the editor concludes, Sweden needs the military assistance and security guarantee which membership in NATO would give. This argument and the perception of NATO as the simple and cheap solution show a surprising naiveté in the public debate. If NATO should accept a future Swedish application for membership, it would, most certainly, be under the condition that Sweden is able to contribute with resources which are, at least, of the same strength and quality as the present Swedish Armed Forces. In support of this, there is the general opinion in the United States that those US allies in Europe and in Asia, with strong economies, ought to make a greater contribution to the defense of their own regions.

On the assumption that NATO would accept Sweden as a member, which is far from certain, this would, at first glance, look like the perfect solution. To be a member of the most powerful military organization ever established would bring security in the shape of deterrence and, if involved in conflict, vast military resources. But, Swedish membership would also draw a new line in Europe, one that would be further east, close to Russia and to one of Russias most important security interests, the Kola Peninsula.

Furthermore, Swedish membership in NATO would have great impact on Finland. During recent years, Finland has succeeded in loosening her ties with Russia, which dated back to the termination of WW II. This has been a drawn out process for Finland and one not without difficulties. Probably, Sweden's role in the "Nordic Stability", i.e. Sweden's role as a neutral country situated between a NATO member, Norway, in the west and Finland, in the east, facilitated Finland's success. Swedish membership in NATO could be perceived by Russia as a threat, particularly if any of the

former Warsaw Pact countries are also moving toward NATO. To avoid being bullied into a new security arrangement with Russia, Finland, cherishing her own security, would probably be forced to apply for NATO membership herself. Such a development would, most certainly, alter the present positive trend in the relations between Russia and Western Europe to a less benign one. Swedish membership in NATO could, therefore, result in increased tension in Northern Europe, creating a greater risk that Sweden may be involved in a crisis or a conflict.

By becoming a member of NATO, Sweden would create a paradox. While Sweden would have a higher degree of security within NATO, she would face a greater risk of being involved in crises which could escalate to full scale conflicts, as tensions in Northern Europe would increase substantially. Thus, being a member of NATO would only partly achieve the objectives of Swedish security policy. That solution would not support the important components of Swedish security policy which are to work externally for defusing tension, for arms reduction, for cooperation and democratic development, and for the objective of contributing to lasting peace and stability in Scandinavia and surrounding areas. In all of these, the utmost objective is to defuse the risk of Sweden getting involved in or being affected by war. This argument leaves Sweden with one remaining alternative: to apply for membership in the WEU only.

Collective Security Within the EU.

Through the CFSP and the WEU, the European Union will try to foster a peaceful and stable development in Europe to gain security for its members. While accepting the European Union Treaty as a foundation for its membership, Sweden has also accepted the CFSP. That agreement is a commitment to work together with the other members to achieve the objectives of the Union, which are the same objectives that Sweden has on its agenda. The ability of the EU to achieve those objectives requires each member to foster mutual cooperation to the best of its ability and to

contribute with all means available. The armed forces of each member are, together with diplomacy and a strong economy, important means in this process. Sweden has competent and relatively strong armed forces; in fact, it is the strongest of the three new members. Furthermore, Sweden has gained a good reputation throughout the international community and a great deal of experience from taking part in several UN peace-keeping missions. Clearly, the armed forces of Sweden can contribute to achieve the objectives of the EU.

As described earlier, the path toward a peaceful Europe composed of democratic states is filled with pitfalls and problems. To become a member of the WEU is, therefore, not a guarantee for achieving the objectives stated in Sweden's security policy, but it gives Sweden an opportunity to take part in and to influence the development in a direction that is consistent with Sweden's interests. In addition, a Swedish membership in the WEU strengthens the collective security arrangements of Europe and this, in turn, strengthens the security of Sweden. Hence, it seems as if this alternative avoids the tension of an expanded NATO, adds to Sweden's security by collective strength and contributes to unity of effort in Europe. These arguments suggest that full membership in the WEU is a solution that has fewer risks, fewer uncertainties and fewer unknowns than the other alternatives and, furthermore, increases Sweden's and Europe's ability to handle the uncertainties and unknowns contained in the future.

As a member of the WEU, Sweden ought to contribute especially with:

- * Active diplomacy to foster cooperation and confidence within the WEU, as well as between the WEU and the former communist states of Eastern Europe (especially Russia and the Ukraine). The WEU is not yet the fully structured defense organization needed to serve the EU. During the build-up phase, it is essential that all members take part in the process, particularly nations as Sweden ought to actively engage themselves to bring about an organization which serves small nations as well as more powerful countries as Germany, UK and France.

- * Active diplomacy to promote the long term objectives of the EU and the WEU to integrate the former communist states of Eastern Europe into the security structure.
- * Active diplomacy to coordinate the WEU with the OCSE, strengthening both organizations. Today the interface within the security structure of Europe, containing NATO, the OSCE and the EU/WEU, is somewhat vague about responsibilities and missions. The future European security structure ought to clarify the missions and responsibilities between the organizations in order to facilitate coordination and unity of effort.
- * Armed forces that is relatively strong and well-balanced, able to deter and to defend Swedish territory against any aggression. Sweden has the military capability, the infrastructure and the economic means necessary to maintain and sustain armed forces capable of crisis management, deterrence and defense.
- * Peace-keeping forces from all the armed forces services, with units trained and equipped to take part in peace-keeping missions. Besides well-trained units, Sweden can contribute with an extensive experience and specially designed education of various types of peace-keeping units. Furthermore, Sweden should influence the development of the WEU toward an organization which acts as peace-keeper within a mandate given by the UN and/or the OSCE.
- * Peace-enforcement forces that are ready, equipped, and educated to be able to take part in peace-enforcement missions within a mandate given by the UN and/or the OSCE. If necessary the WEU, in cooperation with NATO or alone, has to be able to conduct peace-enforcement. This ability should foremost be used as deterrence and, if need be, employed to avoid further instability such as that currently seen in former Yugoslavia.

The Right Time, and High Time to Make a Decision.

For the time being, there is no immediate and overwhelming threat to Sweden. Europe is undergoing a rapid and fundamental transformation from the Cold War Era into something, so far, unknown. Hopefully, Europe will come out a peaceful continent with more cooperation and with less tension between the nations. The development toward a Europe of tomorrow contains numerous possibilities and challenges. To be able to take on the challenges and to take advantage of the possibilities, Sweden needs a security policy which is adjusted to the new situation. Now is the right time, and high time, to consider carefully and to decide a new course

toward fulfilment of Swedish security policy's objectives. It is essential for Sweden to choose a solution that will be valid into the next century, one which is flexible, and one which is able to influence the developments of the emerging collective security system of the new Europe.

Notes.

¹ As a result of the Maastricht meeting in December 1991, the European Community (EC) transformed into the European Union (EU) January 1994.

² Swedish Ministry of Defense, Swedish Defence. (Stockholm, 1993) p. 14.

³ Swedish Defense Headquarters, Facts and figures, the Swedish Defence 1994/95. (Stockholm, 1994) p. 4.

⁴ Bundessprachenamt SI 1, European Security in the 90's. (Bonn, January 1994) p. 10.

⁵ Ibid. p.6.

⁶ Swedish Ministry of Defense, Defense made in Sweden. Speeches by Defense Minister Mr Anders Björk. (Stockholm, 1992) p.7.

⁷ Erik Rossander, "Betydande rysk kapacitet kan åter utvecklas". Armén, No 1, (February 1994) p. 14.

⁸ Name of the area consisting of the Kola Peninsula and the parts of Norway, Sweden and Finland situated north of the arctic circle.

⁹ Swedish Ministry of Defense, Defense made in Sweden. Speeches by Defense Minister Mr Anders Björk. (Stockholm, 1992) p.10.

¹⁰ Swedish Defense Headquarters, Info Nytt, No 4/95, (Stockholm, February 2, 1995) pp. 6-7.

¹¹ Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Premature Partnership". Foreign Affairs, Vol 73, No 2, (March/April 1994.) p. 71.

¹² In Denmark the majority actually voted no, which meant substantial problems to EC. The issue was solved by giving Denmark explicit exceptions from the treaty.

¹³ Ronald D. Asmus, et al, "Building a new NATO". Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, No 4, (Sept/Oct 1993.) p. 31.

¹⁴ Bill Clinton, A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement. (The White House, July 1994.) p. 22.

¹⁵ Zbigniew Brzezinski, "The Premature Partnership". Foreign Affairs, Vol 73, No 2, (March/April 1994.) p. 77.

¹⁶ The Providence Journal, (December 6, 1994.) p. A7.

¹⁷ Ronald D. Asmus, et al, "Building a new NATO". Foreign Affairs, Vol. 72, No 4, (Sept/Oct 1993.) p. 31.

¹⁸ Swedish Ministry of Defense, Defense made in Sweden. Speeches by Defense Minister Mr. Anders Björk. (Stockholm, 1992) p.7.